GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3493
ANSWERED ON:19.03.2013
PROCUREMENT FROM ASSAM
Ajmal Shri Badruddin

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether procurement of foodgrains including rice from Assam is being accorded a lower priority by the Government agencies as compared to other foodgrain producing States;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor indicating the total quantum of foodgrains produced and procured during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for increasing procurement and making proper arrangement for storage and marketing of foodgrains in Assam?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION(PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a): No, Madam. The procurement of foodgrains in the country including Assam is undertaken by State Governments and Food Corporation of India (FCI) as per the uniform procurement policy.

(b): The details of production and procurement of rice and wheat during the last three years and current year, State-wise, are given at Annexure-I and II.

(c): The steps taken by the Government for increasing procurement of foodgrains and their proper storage and marketing are given below:-

1. Minimum Support Price (MSP) announced by the Government is applicable in all the States, including Assam. In order to extend the benefit of MSP to farmers, FCI, in consultation with the State Government operates sufficient number of purchase centres. In case of Assam, FCI and the State Government have opened 14 and 18 procurement centres respectively during KMS 2012-13. All the foodgrains conforming to the prescribed specifications offered for sale at specified procurement centers are bought by the public procurement agencies at the Minimum Support Price. (MSP).

2. In order to enhance efficiency in procurement and encourage local procurement to the maximum extent, the Government introduced Decentralised Procurement Scheme in 1997-98, and the State Government has been repeatedly requested to adopt the same. In addition, the State Government has also been requested to take the following steps to increase procurement:-

(i) A dedicated procurement agency may be set by the State Government to strengthen procurement infrastructure in the State.

(ii) Provision of funds to undertake procurement operations either through their own budget or through borrowings from Reserve Bank of India or consortium of Banks.

(iii) Steps may be taken for timely payment of MSP to farmers either through account payee cheques or through direct bank transfer to farmer`s account.

(iv) Milling capacity may be increased to enable milling of paddy procured within the state.

(v) Storage capacities may be enhanced particularly for intermediate storage of foodgrains.

3. A storage capacity of 2.80 lakh tons is available in the state, which is adequate to accommodate the stocks.